

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 37

Introduced by Assembly Member De Leon

February 19, 2010

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 37—Relative to immigration.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AJR 37, as introduced, De Leon. Immigration.

This measure would specify principles for repairing the nation’s broken immigration system and would urge Congress and the President of the United States to take a comprehensive and workable approach to improving the nation’s immigration system using those principles.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The United States of America was founded by
2 immigrants who traveled around the world seeking a better life;
3 and
4 WHEREAS, The current immigration system is broken. It
5 separates families, reduces the effectiveness of national security
6 programs, contributes to labor abuses, and creates long backlogs
7 for families seeking naturalization. Further, it neglects the hard
8 work and financial contributions immigrants make to our country;
9 and
10 WHEREAS, It is estimated that about 11 million undocumented
11 immigrants are in the United States; and
12 WHEREAS, California has one of the biggest populations of
13 immigrants, both legal and undocumented; and
14 WHEREAS, Immigrants and their children comprise nearly
15 one-half of California’s population and live and work in all 58

1 counties, most notably in the San Diego, Central Valley, Los
2 Angeles, and greater San Francisco areas; and

3 WHEREAS, Approximately 77% of undocumented immigrants
4 that reside in California live with families members that are legal
5 United States residents and citizens; and

6 WHEREAS, One in eleven workers in California is an
7 undocumented immigrant, and immigrants are a vibrant,
8 productive, and vital part of the state's growing economy, diverse
9 cultural fabric, and changing demographics. Immigrant worker
10 populations in California are concentrated in a variety of sectors,
11 including leisure and hospitality, construction, food and agriculture,
12 service, transportation, and textile sectors. Many immigrants
13 throughout the state even own their own small businesses; and

14 WHEREAS, The integration of immigrants and the development
15 of a comprehensive approach to solve our broken immigration
16 system is critical to ensure that our state continues to have a strong
17 economy; and

18 WHEREAS, Fixing our broken immigration system would have
19 a positive impact on the economy because moving workers out of
20 a vulnerable underground status produces both short-term and
21 long-term economic gains. Doing so will strengthen the ability of
22 working families to become more productive, with higher levels
23 of income and job-generating consumption, and will increase their
24 net contributions to tax revenues; and

25 WHEREAS, Fixing our broken immigration system would have
26 a positive impact on the economy in the short and long term.
27 Recent data released by the Center for American Progress indicates
28 that legalizing the status of undocumented immigrants working
29 and living in the United States would create roughly \$1.5 trillion
30 in additional GDP growth over 10 years and increase wages for
31 all workers; and

32 WHEREAS, A study released by the University of Southern
33 California estimates that the immediate and long-term effects of
34 enacting comprehensive immigration reform would result in a \$16
35 billion boost to California's economy; and

36 WHEREAS, Modernizing our antiquated and dysfunctional
37 immigration system will uphold our nation's basic values of
38 fairness, equal opportunity, and respect for the law; and

39 WHEREAS, A comprehensive approach to solve our broken
40 immigration system, one that works for all communities and

1 families in America, should include the following elements: (1) a
2 plan for providing legal status with a path to citizenship to
3 undocumented immigrants who are working and living in the
4 United States, which plan should include the AgJOBS Act of 2009
5 and DREAM Act of 2009, (2) improvement of the economic
6 situation of all workers in the United States, (3) the reform of visa
7 programs in order to keep families together, protect workers' rights,
8 and ensure that future immigration is regulated and controlled
9 rather than illegal and chaotic, (4) the implementation of smart,
10 effective enforcement measures targeted at the worst violators of
11 immigration and labor laws, (5) prioritizing immigrant integration
12 into our communities and country, and (6) respect for the due
13 process rights of everyone in the United States, now, therefore, be
14 it

15 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
16 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature urges the President and
17 the Congress of the United States to take a comprehensive and
18 workable approach to solving our nation's broken immigration
19 system, using the principles described in this resolution; and be it
20 further

21 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
22 of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the
23 United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and
24 to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress
25 of the United States.